

# News from the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services



29 Hazen Drive, Concord, NH 03302-0095  
For information online, visit [www.des.nh.gov](http://www.des.nh.gov)  
James P. Martin, Public Information Officer  
(603) 271-3710; [jmartin@des.state.nh.us](mailto:jmartin@des.state.nh.us)

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

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**CONTACT:** Sherry Godlewski, (603) 271-6801  
Jim Martin, (603) 271-3710

## State Declares Air Quality Action Day

*Unhealthy Air Pollution Levels Predicted for Tomorrow*

Concord, NH - Air pollution concentrations are expected to reach unhealthy levels in **Rockingham and Hillsborough Counties on Friday, August 3<sup>rd</sup>**. State officials are calling for an Air Quality Action Day to advise individuals in these areas, especially active children and adults or anyone with heart disease or respiratory conditions such as asthma, emphysema, and bronchitis, to take precautions to protect their health by avoiding prolonged outdoor activity. Even healthy individuals may experience mild health effects and should limit strenuous or prolonged outdoor activities, especially during afternoon and early evening hours when air pollution levels are typically the highest.

The New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (DES) expects concentrations of ground-level ozone, the main component of smog and the most prevalent air pollutant during the summer season, to increase beginning on August 2, resulting in unhealthy conditions for sensitive individuals on August 3 in Rockingham and Hillsborough Counties. In addition, concentrations of fine particles are expected to be elevated throughout the state. These particles can cause adverse health effects in people with heart or lung disease and may reduce visibility. The combination of these two pollutants at elevated concentrations may intensify health effects.

The unhealthy air quality is due to the persistence of high temperatures and winds coming from urban areas located south and southwest of New Hampshire. Conditions are expected to improve late on Friday as a cold front moves into the region, bringing a shift in wind direction and an increased chance of precipitation.

Symptoms of ozone exposure include coughing, wheezing, chest tightness or pain when inhaling deeply, and shortness of breath. Fine particle pollution can significantly aggravate existing diseases such as asthma and bronchitis. When exposed to particle pollution, people with heart disease may experience chest pain, palpitations, shortness of breath, and fatigue. People with existing lung diseases may not be able to breathe as deeply or vigorously as normal and may experience symptoms such as coughing and shortness of breath. The severity of the health effects increases as ozone and fine particle concentrations increase.

For further information about potential adverse health effects of ozone exposure and particle pollution, contact DES at **(603) 271-4664**. For air quality forecasts and current air pollution levels in New Hampshire, call **1-800-935-SMOG** or visit the DES website at [www.airquality.nh.gov](http://www.airquality.nh.gov).

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